

Press Information

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BLAKEMANS CONTINUES ITS TRANSITION TO A FULL VOLVO FLEET WITH THREE NEW FH GLOBETROTTER XL TRUCKS

Sausage manufacturer James T Blakeman and Co. Ltd has taken delivery of three Volvo FH Globetrotter XL trucks having taken the decision to switch its entire distribution fleet to the Swedish manufacturer.

The 6x2 tractor units join three existing FHs that were delivered in 2020, with the new models benefiting from updated styling, enhanced fuel-saving features and a newly designed interior, incorporating a fully digital 12-inch high-res instrument display. Supplied by Mark Lingard, Customer Solutions Manager at Thomas Hardie Commercials, the FHs are powered by Volvo's D13K Euro-6 engine, rated at 500 hp and generating up to 2,500 Nm of torque.

Nathan Hodgkiss, Transport Manager at Blakemans, says: "We felt that it was the right move for us to switch to a one manufacturer fleet and it was quite a simple choice to go with Volvo. They are a premium truck manufacturer with excellent build quality, very high safety standards, reliability and excellent fuel economy. We get a very good level of service from Thomas Hardie Commercials, which is essential to us in eliminating downtime.

"Driver influence was another big factor. All the drivers really like the Volvos and these new model FHs with the Globetrotter XL cabs just take things up a step further. It's a great truck and a really nice working environment. We have one more truck to replace, but by the end of the year all seven vehicles in the fleet will be Volvo."

Blakemans will use the FHs to deliver their own sausages to the catering industry and ready meal manufacturers around the UK. Backed by Volvo Gold Contracts, for maximum uptime and reassurance, the FHs will each clock up roughly 75,000 miles per year, working five days a week, with all servicing and maintenance carried out by Thomas Hardie Commercials' depot in Middlewich.

"Our drivers can be out on the road for several days at a time – we go all the way up to Aberdeen and down as far as Plymouth, so it's important they are happy in their vehicles," explains Nathan.

To enhance the comfort of the Globetrotter XL cabs further, Blakemans has specified the FHs with Drive ++ and Living Plus packages. The benefits include an electrically operated tinted glass roof hatch, twin arm rests for both the driver and passenger seats, side sun visors, leather upholstery and steering wheel, 33-litre under bunk fridge, plus DAB radio and satellite navigation.

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The trucks also come with Volvo's I-Park Cool, an intelligent overnight air conditioning system, allowing the drivers to sleep at their chosen temperature from dusk till dawn. Factory-fitted, it has zero impact on fuel consumption.

Safety is enhanced with the Visibility Plus package, including electrically heated and operated main and wide-angle mirrors, rain sensing windscreen wipers and LED headlamps.

"We do like to have them spec'd to a very high standard," adds Nathan. "They really are lovely trucks, combining all the creature comforts you could want for the driver, with good reliability as well – which is so important in our line of work."

One of Europe's largest manufacturers of sausage and meat products, the Blakeman family has supplied the UK, export catering and fast-food markets for nearly 70 years. Today, the business operates from its Newcastle-under-Lyme production facility and has ensured a reputation for consistently high-quality products, employing a workforce of more than 250 members of staff. Its client portfolio includes Booker Group, Marks & Spencer and Greggs.

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Caption for photograph:

The three new Volvo FH 6x2 tractor units join three existing Volvos in Blakeman's seven-strong fleet.

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